

T H E
W H O L E S Y S T E M
O F T H E
XXVIII A R T I C L E S

3506.d.17
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O F T H E
Evangelical unvaried CONFESSIO^N.

Presented at A U S B O U R G H,

T O T H E

Emperor C H A R L E S V.

B Y T H E

Protestant *Princes* and *States*:

A S

The Elector of Saxony, the Margrave of Brandenburg, the Duke of Lunenbourg, the Landgrave of Hesse; Wolfgang, Prince of Anhalt, the City of Neurenberg, the City of Reutlingen. And read publickly in the DIET, the 30th Day of June, 1730.

T O B E C O M P A R E D W I T H,

The TRANSLATIONS of the MORAVIANS,
Printed at London in the Year 1749, wherein most the Half hath been left out.

Augsburg Confession.

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N E W - Y O R K :

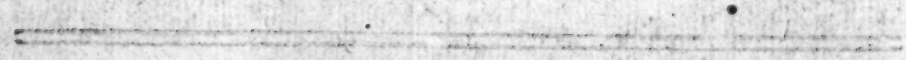
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THE
WHOLE SYSTEM
OF THE
ARTICLES

OF THE
Evangelical univ. Confession.
Presented at AUSTBOURG
TO THE
EMPEROR CHARLES V.
BY THE
Swiss Brethren and States:

At the City of Basle, the Margrave of Brandenburg, the
Bishop of Basle, the Landgrave of Hesse, Wolfgang,
Prince of Ansbach, the City of Nuremberg, the City of
Strasbourg, and several others in the Diet, the year
of our Lord 1530.

TO BE COMPARED WITH
THE TRANSLATIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT
into the German Language, by the same Brethren and States.



W. W. T. O. R. A.
Printed by W. W. T. O. R. A. in the City of Nuremberg.
The Original is in the Library of the University of Nuremberg.

Of the Holy Trinity.

FIRST we teach and believe, with one Consent, according to
 the *Concilium Nicenum* ; That there is one only Divine
 Being, which is named, and truly is, God. Yet in this
 one Divine Being there are Three Persons, equal in Power,
 and co-eternal, God the Father, God the Son, God the
 Holy Ghost : All Three one Divine Being ; which is eternal, without
 Parts, without End, of immense Power, Wisdom and Goodness ;
 Maker and Preserver, of all Things, both visible and invisible. By the
 Word *Person* is not understood a Piece, nor one Property existing in
 another, but one who subsists by himself ; which Word is used of the
Fathers in the same Way and Meaning.

Therefore, we reject all Hereticks teaching the Contrary, as the *Manichæi*, which taught that there are two Gods, the One as the Author of all what is Good, and the other the Offspring of all Evil. *Item.* We reject the *Valentineans*, *Arrians*, *Eunomians*, *Makometists*, and all that hold to their Errors, as the *Samosatæni* old and new ones, supposing that there is but one Person, making of the *Word*, and the Ghost, sophistical Perversions, saying, that these two, are not two Persons, but that mentioning *Word*, did only signify a bodily Word, or Voice, and that the Holy Ghost was but a created Motion in the Creatures.

ARTICLE II.

Of the Original Sin.

It is taught amongst us, that since the Fall of *Adam*, all Men naturally ingendered, are conceived and born in Sin, that is, they from the very Womb, are full of evil Lusts and Inclinations; and have by Nature, no true Fear of God, nor true Faith in God; neither can they have: Also this innate Disease or Original Sin, is truly Sin, and condemns under God's eternal Wrath, all such who are not born again through Water and the Holy Ghost. Therefore we reject the Error of the *Pelagians*, another Sect holding, that Original Sin is no Sin, making thereby Nature pious by natural Power, to the Reproach of the Sufferings and Merit of Christ.

ARTICLE III.

ARTICLE III.

Of Christ's Incarnation, and his Atonement.

We also teach, that God the Son became Man born of the pure Virgin *Mary* : And that the two Natures, the Divine and Human in one Person, being inseparably united, are one Christ, who is true God and Man, who was truly born, suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to the End that he might be a Sacrifice, not only for Original Sin, but also for all other Sins, and appease God's Wrath.

Item : That the same Christ, descended into Hell, and on the third Day truly arose from the Dead ; and ascended into Heaven, sitting at the right Hand of God, that he may reign for ever over all Creatures, and govern them ; that he through the Holy Ghost, may sanctify, purify, strengthen and comfort all who believe on him ; and gives them Life, and imparts to them manifold Gifts and good Things, protecting and defending them against the Devil and Sin : Also that the same Lord Jesus Christ will at last come openly to judge the Quick and the Dead, according to the Apostles. (*Symb. Apost.*)

ARTICLE IV.

Of Justification by Faith.

We also teach, that we cannot attain Forgiveness of Sins and Righteousness before God through our Merit, Work or Satisfaction ; but that we obtain Pardon of Sins, and are made righteous before God, out of Grace for Christ's Sake, through Faith, whereby we believe, that Christ hath suffered for us, and that for his Sake, Sin is forgiven us, and Righteousness and eternal Life, bestowed upon us ; for it is this Faith, which God will account and impute for Righteousness before him, as *Paul* says, *Rom. iii.* and ver. 4.

ARTICLE V.

Of the Ministers of the Gospel, or of the Preaching of the Gospel.

For the attaining of such Faith, God hath instituted the Office of a Preacher ; hath given the Gospel and the Sacraments, whereby as through Means, he gives the holy Spirit : Which Gospel teaches, that we through the Merit of Christ, not through our own Merit, have a propitious God, if so be, that we believe it. Therefore are rejected, the *Anabaptists* and others, who teach, that we obtain the holy Spirit, without the external Word of the Gospel, by our own Preparation, Thoughts and Works.

ARTICLE VI.

ARTICLE VI.

Of good Works following Faith.

We further teach, that even such Faith shall bring forth good Fruits, and good Works; and that a Man must do all Kinds of good Works, which God hath commanded, for God's Sake; but must not trust in such Works, to merit Grace before God thereby; for we receive Forgiveness of Sins and Righteousness, through Faith in Christ; as Christ himself speaks, *When ye have done all, say ye are unprofitable Servants.* Ambrose says, *that the Fathers teach.* God hath determined, that whosoever believeth in Christ, shall be saved; and not through Works, but only through Faith, without Merit, hath the Forgiveness of Sins.

ARTICLE VII.

Of the Christian Church.

We also teach, that there is, and at all Times must remain, a holy Christian Church, which is the Assembly of all Believers: in which the Gospel is preached purely, and the holy Sacraments administered agreeably to the Gospel. For this is enough towards true Unity of the Christian Churches, that they be unanimous in hearing, in preaching the Gospel according to its pure Sense, and administering the Sacraments, according to the Word of God; nor is it necessary to true Union, of the Christian Churches, that every where uniform Ceremonies, which are established by Men, should be held, as Paul says, *Eph. iv. One Body, one Spirit, as ye are called, in one Hope of your calling: One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism.*

ARTICLE VIII.

In the Church are good and bad Ones amongst one another.

Item. Although the Christian Church, is properly nothing else, but the Assembly of all Believers and Saints, yet since in this Life many false Christians, and Hypocrites; yea open Sinners, remain amidst the Godly, the Sacraments are notwithstanding valid, although the Priests by whom they are administered, be not pious, as Christ himself has intimated, *The Pharisees sit in Moses Seat, &c.* The *Donatists* therefore, and all who hold otherwise, are rejected.

ARTICLE IX.

Of the holy Baptism.

Concerning Baptism, we teach, that it is necessary; and that through it, Grace is offered. That Children also ought to be baptized, who through
such

such Baptism, are delivered unto God, and become pleasing to him: Therefore we reject the *Anabaptists*, teaching, that the Baptism of Infants is unbecoming.

ARTICLE X.

Of the Lord's Supper.

Concerning the Lord's Supper, we teach thus, that the true Body and Blood of Christ are really present in the Lord's Supper, with the visible Bread and Wine; and are there imparted and received: Therefore we also reject the contrary Doctrine.

ARTICLE XI.

Of Confession, or Absolution.

Of Confession and Absolution, we teach, that private Absolution should be kept up in the Church, and not let drop. Although in Confession, there is no Necessity to recount all Misdeeds and Sins, since this is also impossible. *Psal. xix. Who can tell how oft he offendeth?*

ARTICLE XII.

Of Repentance.

Concerning Repentance, it is taught, that those who have sinned after Baptism, when they come to Repentance, may obtain Remission of Sin, and Absolution shall not be refused them by the Church, when they do repent. Now true and right Repentance is properly Sorrow and Grief, or to be in Terror on Account of Sin; and yet, on the other Hand, to believe in the Gospel and Absolution, that Sin is forgiven, and Grace purchased, through Jesus Christ; which Faith, does again comfort and pacify the Heart. Afterwards, Amendment should also follow, and that a Man leave off from Sin; for this should be the Fruits of Repentance, as *John* says, *Mat. iii. Bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance.*

Here they are opposed and rejected, who teach, that those who have once been pious, cannot any more fall: Also are rejected the *Novatiani*, who denied Absolution to such who had sinned after Baptism.

Item. They are rejected, who do not teach, that one obtains Remission of Sin through Faith, but through our making Compensation.

ARTICLE XIII.

Of the Use of the Sacraments.

We teach of the Use of the Sacraments, that they were instituted, not only to be Marks, whereby Christians may outwardly be known, but

but that they are Marks and Testimonies of the Divine Will towards us, to the awakening and stengthening of our Faith thereby. Wherefore they also require Faith, and are then rightly used, when one receives them in Faith, and by them strengthens his Faith.

ARTICLE XIV.

Of the Church Government, or Regulations.

Concerning Church Government, we teach, that without a lawful Call, no one shall publickly teach or preach, or administer the Sacraments.

ARTICLE XV.

Of the Church Ordinances made by Men.

We teach thereof, that those should be kept, which can be kept without Sin, and which serve unto Peace and good Order in the Church, as certain Holidays, Festivals, and the like; but we instruct at the same Time, that the Conscience must not be burdened therewith, as if such Things were necessary to Salvation. For touching this, it is taught, that all Ordinances and Traditions made by Men to that End, to reconcile God, and merit Grace thereby, are contrary to the Gospel, and to the Doctrine of Faith in Christ; such as the Promises in the Cloisters, and other Institutions of the Difference of Meats, and Days, &c. in Hopes of purchasing Grace thereby, and to satisfy for Sin, are unbecoming (unnecessary) and against the Gospel.

ARTICLE XVI.

Of Civil Government.

Concerning the State and secular Government, we teach, that all Magistracy in the World, and settled Governments, Laws, and good Order, were created and instituted by God; and that Christians may, without Sin, bear the Office of Rulers, Princes and Judges; and may, agreeable to imperial Statutes in use, decide Cases, and pronounce Judgment, may punish evil Doers with the Sword, carry on just Wars and Fights. Also, Christians may buy and sell, take an imposed Oath, have Possessions, live in holy Wedlock, &c. Here is rejected, the Opinion of the *Anabaptists*, teaching, that none of the above mentioned Things are consistig with the Characters of a Christian. Also we reject, that Notion of Christian Perfection of them which say, that bodily leaving of House and Home, Wife and Children, and divesting ones self of the forementioned Particulars, is the Christian Perfection. To which we Answer, this alone is the right Perfection, the true Fear of God, and true Faith in God; for the Gospel doth not inculcate an outward and temporal, but an inward and eternal

eternal Situation, (Being) and Righteousness of the Heart; and does not overturn secular Rule and Government, nor Marriage: But requires, that we account all this as the real Ordinance of God; and in such States, each according to his Vocation, shew forth Christian Charity, and right good Works. Therefore it is the Duty of Christians, to be subject to the Magistracy, and obedient to its Commands, in every Thing that can be done without Sin; for if indeed the Magistrate's Command cannot be done without Sin, one must obey God rather than Man. *Acts iv.*

ARTICLE XVII.

Of the last Judgment.

We also teach, that our Lord Jesus Christ will at the last Day come to Judgment, and will raise up all the Dead. To the Elect, and to Believers, he will give eternal Life, and everlasting Joy: But wicked Men, and Devils, he will condemn to Hell, and everlasting Punishment. Therefore are rejected, the *Anabaptists*, holding, that the Devils and damned Men, shall not have eternal Pain and Anguish. Also we reject those *Judaical* Doctrines, (raising also now) that before the Resurrection of the Dead, the Saints and Godly, shall have a worldly Kingdom, and shall extirpate all the Ungodly.

ARTICLE XVIII.

Of free Will.

Concerning free Will, it is taught, that Man has in some Measure, a free Will, to live honest outwardly, and to chuse those Things, which Reason comprehends. But without Grace, Help, and Operation of the holy Spirit, Man is not able to be pleasing to God, heartily to fear God, to love or to believe in him, or to cast away out of the Heart, the innate evil Lusts; but such Things are effected through the holy Spirit, which is given through God's Word: For *Paul* says, *1 Cor. ii. The natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God.* And that it may be known, that herein we teach nothing new, these are clear Words of the forementioned Father *Augustin*, *Hypognostiks*, Book III. We acknowledge, that there is in all Men a free Will; for they all have a natural implanted Understanding and Reason: Not that they are able to transact any Thing with God, as from the Heart to love God, and to fear him; but only in external Works of this Life, they have Liberty to chuse Good or Bad. The Good I mean, which Nature is able to do; as to work in the Field, or not, to eat, to drink, to go to a Friend, or not, to put on or put off a Garment, to build, to take a Wife, to follow a Trade, and to do such like Things, which are profitable and Good: All which, however is not, neither subsists without God, but all is from him and through him.

him. On the other Hand, Man can also, out of his own Choice, enterprize something bad; as to kneel down before an Idol, to commit Murder, &c.

ARTICLE XIX.

Of the Cause of Sin.

Concerning the Cause of Sin, it is taught among us, that although God Almighty created and upholds all Nature; yet the perverse Will doth work Sin in all who are wicked, and Contemners of God; such as is the Will of the Devil, and of all the Ungodly, who, as God withdrew his Hand, turned himself from Good unto Evil, as Christ speaks, *John viii. The Devil, when he speaks a Lye, speaks of his own.*

ARTICLE XX.

Faith and good Works, further explained.

In the latter of these we are fully blamed, that we forbid them; for in our Writings of the Ten Commandments, and others, we demonstrate, that we give needful and sufficient Instructions and Exhortations of right good Works, whereof in old Times little has been taught.

But they did rather work and force in a childish Manner, in all their Sermons, upon unnecessary Works, *vide. Rosarys Service of the Saints* to become a Monk, Pilgrimage, &c. Of such Trifles our Antagonists don't boast so much now, as some Time past; yea they have learnt to speak of Faith, whereof they did not preach nothing at all in Time past.

But now they teach, that we are justified before God through Works not alone, but joining Faith in Christ Jesus, to it, saying, Faith and Works justify us before God. Which Saying, can bring more Comfort than when Dependence on Works is taught.

Now, soasmuch as the Doctrine of Faith, which is the chief Point in Christianity, had for so long a Time not been insisted upon, (which cannot be denied, but the Doctrine of good Works hath been preached every where,) our Preachers hath given the following Explanation about it.

First, That our Works are not able to reconcile us with God, and purchase Grace. But this is effected only through Faith, when one believes, that our Sins are forgiven us for Christ's Sake, who alone is the Mediator to reconcile us to God. Whoever now supposes, that he can, by Works, accomplish this, and merit Grace, he despises Christ, and seeks a Way of his own to God, contrary to the Gospel. This Doctrine of Faith is openly and clearly treated of by *Paul*, in divers Places; particularly in *Eph. ii. By Grace, we are saved, &c.* And that herein no new Sense is introduced, may be demonstrated out of *Augustine*, who treats of this Point diligently; and teaches, that we, through Faith in Christ, obtain Grace, and are justified before God, and not through Works,

as the ancient Treatise *de Spiritus & Litera*, shews throughout. Now although this Doctrine is much despised by People, who have experienced no inward Trial; yet it is found, that to poor and frightened Consciences, it is very comfortable and wholesome. For the Conscience cannot come to rest and Peace through Works, but only through Faith, when it certainly concludes within itself, that for Christ's Sake it hath a gracious God, as Paul says, *Rom. v. Being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God*. This comfort has in former Times not been inculcated in Preaching; but the poor Consciences were put upon their own Works: And various Works were undertaken. For some were driven by Conscience into Cloisters, in hopes of purchasing Grace there, by a Monastie Life; others have invented other Works, whereby to merit Grace and satisfy for Sin. Many of these have experienced, that thereby a Man arrives not at Peace: Therefore it became necessary to preach this Doctrine of Faith in Christ, and diligently to pursue it, that Men might know, that only through Faith, without Merit, we lay hold on God's Grace. Here we make Distinction, and don't speak of that Faith or Knowledge which even the Devils and Wicked may have, which also believe the History, that Christ suffered, and raised from the Dead; but we speak of that true Faith which believes, that we through Christ, do obtain Grace and the Forgiveness of Sin; and he, who knows that through Christ he has a gracious God, calls not upon him, and is without God, is like the Heathen. For the Devil and the Wicked do not believe this Article, the Forgiveness of Sin; and therefore they are at Enmity with God, cannot call upon him, nor hope any Good from him: Wherefore, according to this, if the Scripture speaks of Faith, calls not by that Name such a Knowledge as the Devil and Wicked Men have: For concerning Faith it is thus taught, *Heb. xi.* That Faith is, not only to know the Histories, but to have a Confidence towards God of receiving his Promise. And *Augustinus* also puts us in Mind, that we are to understand Faith in the Scripture Meaning, so much as Confidence towards God, that he is gracious unto us, and not such Knowledge only of the Histories as the Devils also have. Further it is taught, that good Works shall and must be done; not that one should trust in them to merit Grace thereby, but for God's Sake, and to the Praise of God; yet Faith doth always alone lay hold of Grace and Forgiveness of Sin. And since through Faith the Holy Ghost is given, thus also the Heart is made fit to do good Works; for before that it is so long without the holy Spirit, it is too weak; and besides, it is in the Power of the Devil, who compels poor human Nature to many Sins; as we see of the Philosophers, who undertook to live honestly and unblamably, yet have not accomplished it, but have fallen into many great and open Sins. So it goes with that Man who is without the true Faith, and without the holy Spirit, and governs himself by his own human Powers alone.

Therefore

Therefore the Doctrine of Faith is not to be reproached, as if it did forbid good Works, but rather to be recommended, for that it teaches to do good Works, and offers help whereby one may obtain to good Works: For without Faith, and without Christ, the human Nature and Ability is by far too weak to do good Works, as to call upon God, to have Patience in Sufferings, to love one's Neighbour, diligently to discharge Offices intrusted to us, to be obedient, to avoid evil Lusts. Such high and right Works cannot be done without the Help of Christ, as he himself speaks, *John vi. Without me you can do nothing, &c.*

ARTICLE XXI.

Concerning the Worship of Saints.

Our People teach thus, that we ought to think of, or on Saints, in order to strengthen our Faith, when we see how Grace was shewn unto them, and how they were helped through Faith, that so we may take Example from their good Works, each according to his Calling. For Instance, your Imperial Majesty may well take the Example of King *David* to follow him in fighting against the *Turk*; for you stand in the same Office to protect your Subjects. But it cannot be proved by Scripture, that a Man shall call upon the Saints, or seek help from them; for there is but one only Atoner and Mediator appointed between God and Man, *Jesus Christ*. *1 Tim. ii.* Who is the Saviour, the only High Priest, the Mercy Seat, and Intercessor with God, *Rom. viii.* And he alone has promised, that he will hear our Prayer. This also is the highest Worship, according to the Scripture, that a Man from the Heart seek to and call upon this same *Jesus Christ*, in all Needs and Concerns. If any Man sin, *John iii. we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous.*

[Conclusion of the foregoing XXI ARTICLES.]

This is pretty near the Whole of the Doctrine which we teach and preach in our Churches, to instruct and comfort the Consciences, and to edify the Faithful, since we would not chuse to bring our Souls and Bodies into the highest and greatest Danger before God, by abusing and prophaning the Name or Word of God; or to carry to our Children, a Doctrine not conformable to the pure or sound Word of God, and the Christian Truth, as an Inheritance.

And whereas our Doctrine is grounded clearly on the Word of God; yea, it is not against the Catholick, and even the *Roman Church*, (as it can be evidenced by the Writings of the Fathers.) We presume, that our Antagonists have no Reason at all to quarrel with us about the above-mentioned XXI Articles. Therefore, we think, that those holding us as *Separatists* and *Hereticks*, act, and do entirely, unkindly, impudently, and against all Christian Unity and Love, which also reject and separate

us without any Reason of the Word of God. For, the Dissension and Question is principally about some Traditions and Abuses.

Whereas now no Unreasonableness, or Want in our Doctrines, can be found in the fundamental Articles, and these our Confessions, are godly and Christian. The Bishops ought to use more Mildness, altho' there is some Want of the Traditions amongst us, tho' we hope to be able to give convincing Reasons for, why amongst us, some Traditions and Abuses are abrogated.

Of ARTICLES, wherein there are Dissensions, and of the Abuses which are abrogated.

P R E F A C E

Whereas now in our Churches, nothing is taught contrary to the Holy Scriptures, or the Catholick Christian Church, but only some Abuses are altered, which successively of itself did creep in, and are partly established by Violence: Therefore, it will be necessary, to give also an Account of them; and to give Reasons why they have undergone an Alteration, to shew your Imperial Majesty, that there has been nothing done by us impudently, or in an unchristian Manner; but that we are, by the Word of God, (which is to be esteemed higher than all Customs or Traditions) forced to procure such Alterations.

ARTICLE XXII.

Of the two Kinds of Sacraments.

Unto Laymen we distribute the Sacrament under the two Kinds, by Reason of its being an expresse (clear) Precept, or Command, of Christ to do; *Mat. xxvi. 27, Drink ye all of it.* Here Christ commands that they shall drink all of the Cup. And to prevent, that No-Body may tempt to explain these Words in a wrong Sense, as if the Cup did belong to the Priest only, the Apostle Paul shews, *1 Cor. xi.* that the whole Church at *Corinth*, did receive the Sacrament under both Kinds: And this Custom did remain a long Time in the Church, which can be prov'd by the History and Writings of the Fathers. *Cyprianus* mentions in several Places, that in his Time the Cup hath been given to the Laymen. Also *Hieronymus* says, that the Priests gave the Blood of Christ unto the People. In the same Manner commands the Pope *Gelasius*, not to separate the Sacrament. And by all these, there is no Canon found, intimating to receive only one Kind of the Sacrament. Likewise, no body knows at what Time, and by whom this Custom (to receive only one Kind) is introduced; tho' the Cardinal mentions at what Time it was approved of being abrogated. Now it appears clearly, that all such Customs, introduced

introduced against the Word of God, and the old Canons. It was therefore not allowed to burden, force, or trouble the Consciences of such that desired to receive the Sacrament, according to Christ's Institution, but to refuse it to them contrary to Christ's Ordinance. And since the Separation of the Sacraments is contrary to Christ's Ordinance, we also made an End to the customary Processions with the Sacraments.

A R T I C L E XXIII.

Of the Marriage of the Priests.

There hath been universal Complaints of all Men, of low and high Extraction in the World, against the great Unchastity and Dissoluteness of the Priests; which had not the Gift of Continence; and such abominable Crimes did rise up to the highest Degree. Now, to prevent such great and manifold abominable Scandals, Adultery, and other Unchastity, some of our Priests did marry; giving this Reason for it, that they have been obliged, and necessitated, by the strong urging of their Consciences, since the Scripture teaches, that Matrimony is ordained by God, to prevent Unchastity, as Paul says, *To prevent Fornication, let every one have his own Wife.* Item, *It is better to marry, than to burn.* And as Christ saith, they don't all comprehend the Word, wherewith Christ intimates, (who knew well, what Man is) that there are but few having the Gift of Continence. For God created one Man and one Woman, *Gen. i.* Now, whether it is in the Power of Man, without an especial Grace of God, through our own Undertaking and Promise, to alter, change, or make the Creatures of the most high God better, it is evidenced by Experience too clear! For, what good, honest, chaste Life, what Christian and honest Conversation did follow such Undertakings by many? What abominable and terrible Noise and what grievous Torment upon their dying Hour, many felt in their Conscience, is evident; and many did confess themselves. Therefore, since the Word and Command of God, may not be altered by Laws and Promises of Men, the Priests, and other Clergy men in Consideration of this, and many other Causes, were married.

We can also demonstrate by the History and Writs of the Fathers, that the Priests and Deacons have been married in old Times, *1 Tim. iii.* *A Bishop then must be blameless, the Husband of one Wife.* We know, that in Germany, first 200. Years, the Priests have been forced to this Promise of Continence, and violently divorced, which all and every one resisted so strongly and hotly, that an Archbishop of *Montz*, proclaiming this new Command of the Pope, was almost killed by a Mob of the whole Clergy. Which Interdict was undertaken in such a hasty and impudent Manner, that the Pope at that Time not only forbid the future Marriages of the Priest, but even he divorced the Matrimonies.

which

which were already contracted. Which is not only against all divine and natural Laws, but also intirely against the Canons (made by Popes themselves) and the most notable Concilia. It hath been no less observed by many high, noted, pious, and prudent Men, that such forced Celibacy, and the bending of the matrimonial State (which by God is ordained and left free by him) never produced any Good, but rather many great and heavy Vices, with much Badness. A certain Pope himself, *vid.* Pious II. as his History shews, hath had often Occasion to say these Words.

There may be some Reason, why the Matrimony is interdicted unto the Clergy; but we have much higher, greater and importanter Causes, to let them have, and enjoy the Liberty to marry. This Pope, as a prudent and skilful Man, hath had, without Doubt, great Reasons to say so. Therefore, we have the Confidence, with the greatest Submission to your Imperial Majesty, as a Christian and most glorious Emperor to consider most graciously, that in these last Times, whereof the Scripture admonisheth, the World grows from Time to Time worse, and Mankind more corrupted and weaker. It will be no less necessary, needful, and Christian like, to make use of this Consideration, that if Matrimony is forbidden, worse and more abominable Unchastness and Vices may increase in Germany. For no Body can by any Means alter, or ordain these Things more wise and better than God himself, having instituted Matrimony to help human Frailty, and to avoid Unchastness. And this is also intimated by the old Canons. The Rigour of Ordinances must be indulged, by Reason of human Weakness, and to prevent a greater Evil. And it will be very needful in this Respect. For what harm can the Matrimony of the Priests do to the Catholick Church, especially the Pastors, and them that officiate. It is probable, that there will be a Want of Priests and Ministers, if this rigorous Command should indure any longer. And whereas now, the Matrimony of the Priest is founded on the Command and Word of God; and that History proves, that the Priests have been married, and the Promise of Continence hath caused so many abominable and unchristian Scandals, Adultery, unheard and detestable Unchastness, and abominable Vices, which, even by the *Canticks* and *Countess* at Rome hath been shewn, and most lamentably reported; that, by such shocking and detestable Vices, the Anger of God must needs be provoked. It is consequently to be lamented, that a Christian Marriage is not only forbidden, but some undertook also to punish it as a heavy Crime. It is known, that the Matrimonial State is very much recommended in the Imperial Laws, and in all Empires where Laws have been established; except in our Times, it has begun to torment People innocently, (only for Marriage Sake) and more especially the Priests, who ought to be indulged before others. And this is not only committed

committed against the Law of God, but also against the Canons. *Paul, 1. Tim. iv.* calls the Doctrine forbidding Marriage, *a Doctrine of the Devils.* Even Christ himself saith, *John viii. The Devil is a Murderer from the Beginning* which agrees very well, that to forbid to marry, is a Doctrine of the Devils, more especially, if it is maintained with Bloodshed. But, since no human Law can abolish the Command of God, even so can no Promise or Vow alter the Word of God: And for this Reason, *Cyprianus* gives this Council, That the Women, not having the Gift of Continence, may marry: *Epistle llo.* saying, If they wont keep Chastity, nor can, it is better to marry, than to fall by their Lusts into the Fire, and that they should be careful, to give no Scandal to the Brethren or Sisters: And for all this, we observe in all the Canons, a great Indulgence and Condescension, towards them that have done a Vow in their Youth, in which Age, the Priests and the Monks came, for the most Part, by Ignorance, into such a State.

ARTICLE XXIV.

Of the Mass.

We are blamed without a Cause, that we have abrogated the Mass; for it is manifest, that (without praising ourselves) it is kept by us, with greater Devotion and Earnestness, than by our Antagonists. We also instruct the People, with the greatest Diligence, very often, about the holy Sacrament, to what Purpose it is instituted, and how to use it; namely, to comfort the terrified Consciences therewith, whereby the People are allured to the Sacraments and the Mass. In the mean Time, we do give Instruction of the Heterodox Doctrine against the Sacrament. We know of no notable Alteration in the publick Ceremonies of the Mass made by us, except that, in some Places, *High German Songs* are used to instruct and edify the People, which are sung by (or with) the Latin Hymns; since all Ceremonies should aim this Scope, especially, that the People may know what is required by them of the Knowledge of Christ.

But, since the Mass hath been abused in many Ways, as it is known that a yearly Market hath been made thereof, being sold and bought, and for the most Part, was kept in all Churches for the Sake of Money; the Abuse hath been reprov'd very often before our Times, by many learned and pious Men.

Whereas now the Preachers amongst us have preached upon it; and the Priests are exhorted, with these terrifying Threatnings, which certainly should move every Christian, that, *whoever uses the Sacrament unworthily, is guilty of the Flesh and Blood of Christ*: Thereupon are such Market Mass, and Corner, (conventual Mass, which till now, by Violence, for Money, and the Prebend's Sake, have been introduced) rejected in our Churches.

Whereby

Whereby is also reprov'd this most shocking Error, that Christ should have only satisfied by his Death for the original Sin; and that the Mass was instituted for an Oblation for the Living and Dead, thereby to take away the Sin, and to reconcile God: And this caused the Question, Whether a Mass kept for many, did merit so much as that kept for every one in particular? And this was the Offspring of so many unspeakable Multitudes of Mass, that every one thought to get by such a Worship all they wanted; and gave an Occasion, that thereby the Faith in Christ, and true Worship, been was forgotten by it. Therefore, it has given Instruction, as Necessary did require it, without doubt, to know how the Sacrament should be used rightly.

First, That there is no other Oblation for the original Sin, as well as others, than the Death of Christ only, which is proved by the Scripture in sundry Places. For thus it is written in the Epistle to the Hebrews, *That Christ did sanctify himself once, and hath done by it a Reconciliation for all Sins.* It is an unheard of Newness, to teach in the Churches, that Christ's Death should be only the Reconciliation for the original Sin, and not for all other Sins: Therefore, we presume, that every one will conceive, that such an Error is not rejected without Cause.

Secondly, Paul teaches, That we receive Grace before God by Faith, and not by Works. But against this, contradicts the Abuse of the Mass, if we think to receive Grace by it, to remove, or to take away Sins; to receive Grace, and all Good from God, not only for the Priests, but also for the whole World, for Living and for Dead.

Thirdly, The holy Sacrament is instituted, not to introduce by it a Sacrifice for Sin, (for the Oblation is made already,) but that our Faith might be excited and the Conscience comforted, which are administered by the Sacrament, that Grace and Forgiveness of Sin, is offered by Christ, and promised. Therefore requires this Sacrament, Faith, and is used to no purpose without Faith.

And since the Mass is no Sacrament, for Living and Dead to take away their Sins, but it shall be a Distribution of the Sacrament to be received by the Priest and the People: Therefore we have this Custom amongst us, that, on Feast Days or else where (if there are some desiring the Sacrament of the Lord) it is given to those, that desire it. By Consequence, remains by us the Mass in its lawful Use, as it is used in the former Times in the Churches, which can be seen 1 Cor. xi. As well as in the Writings of the Fathers. Chrysostom says, that the Priest daily stands, and calls some to the Lord's Table, and some he forbids to come. Also the old Canons shew, that one hath officiated, and the others, Priests and Deacons have received the Sacrament. For thus intimate the Words in the *Canone Niceno*. *The Deacons shall ordinarily (decetly) receive the Sacrament after the Priests, from the Bishop or Priest.*

Whereas

Whereas it now appears, that we havenot undertaken a Newness (*Novitiation*) which never might have been in the Church; and whereas in the publick Mass no notable Alteration is made, but the other unneedful Masses are fallen away, which by an Abuse with the parochce Mass crept in: We presume, that by no Right, this Way of officiating the Mass can be declared heretical or unchristian, and condemned. For even in great Churches in former Times, where abundance of People was, there hath not been kept daily Mass: Also on those Days, when the Congregations met, as *Historia Tripartita* shews, *Lib. 9.* that in *Alexandria* on Wednesday and Friday, the Scripture hath been read, and explained, and the whole Worship officiated without Mass.

ARTICLE XXV.

Of the Confession, and Absolution.

The Confession is not abrogated by our Preachers; for we hold this Custom, to give the Sacrament to none who hath not duly confessed, and before he is absolved.

In the mean Time is the People industriously instructed how comfortable the Word of Absolution is, and how reverently it ought to be regarded: For it is not the Voice or Word of Men, but the Word of God, that absolves and pardons the Sins, since it is spoken instead of God, according to his Word. We inculcate and teach with the greatest Industry, to shew, how needful and comfortable this Power of the Keys is for the terrified Consciences. And also we teach, how God requireth to believe the Absolution, none less, as if we did hear the Voice from Heaven, and to be comforted thereby, knowing that by such Faith we receive the Remission of Sins. In former Times the Preachers did not mention one single Word of these Points: but made it their Business to terrify the Consciences with a long Account of Sins, with Satisfaction, with Abstinence, with Pilgrimage and Processions, &c. And many of our Antagonists own themselves, that many amongst us did write more Orthodox of the true Christian Repentance, than it had been done long before. For we teach of the Confession thus: That none should be forced to tell the Sins by their Names: For such a Thing is impossible, as the Psalmist says, *Who knows how often he sins.* *Jeremiab* said, *Who can search it.* The miserable human Nature is penetrated by sin so deep, that we can't see or know them all. And it would be of a very small Benefit to us, if we only should be absolved of them Sins, we know. It is therefore unnecessary, to insist upon telling all Sins by their Names. And this hath been the Custom of the Fathers, since we read *Distinct. 1. Poenitentia*, where the Words of *Chrysostom* are alledged, saying, "I don't pretend that you should prostitute yourselves publickly, or to accuse and give yourselves publickly up guilty to others; but obey the

Prophet, saying, *Confess unto the Lord thy Ways.* Therefore confess your Sins unto God the true Judge, in your Prayers, and dont say your Sins with your Tongue, but in your Conscience. Here it is evident, that *Chrysostom* doth not require or force to tell the Sins Names. In the same Way teaches the *Glossa in Decretis de Poenitentia Distinct.* 3.
 * That the Confession is not expressely commanded in the Word, but instituted by the Church: Notwithstanding our Ministers of the Gospel teach and instruct diligently, that the Confession, for Absolutions sake, which is the most chief and principal in the Confession, in order to comfort the burthened Consciences, and for other Reasons, is to be preserved and kept up.

A R T I C L E XXVI.

Of the Difference of Meat.

In former Times, they have preached and written, that the Difference of Victuals, and such-like Traditions, ordained by Men, serve to obtain Mercy, to merit Grace, and to make Satisfaction for their Sins: Upon this Foundation, have they daily invented new Fast Days, new Ceremonies, and new Orders; and press'd strong and hard upon these Inventions, as if they were meritorious before God, to obtain Grace, if they observe them; but the Transgressors would commit great Sins, if they neglected them, which was the Offspring of great Errors in the Church.

First, Through these Inventions are the Grace by Christ, and the Doctrine by Faith, darkened, which the holy Gospel, with great Sincerity preaches, and strongly presses, that the Sufferings and Merits of Christ only, should be esteemed by us, high and precious, that to believe in Christ, should far exceed all Works and human Inventions: Therefore, has *St. Paul* wrote with great Warmth, against the Laws and Institutions of Men; and taught that we, through Works, could not be acceptable before God, but only through Faith in Christ, that we only receive Mercy through Christ. This Article of Faith, is quite darkened, and blotted out by their Institutions, since they taught that we should receive Mercy through good Works, by fasting, with Deference to Meat and Clothing, &c.

Secondly, Such Institutions have darkened the Commandments of the Lord, for their Institutions were preferred before the Lord's. This was only believed by them to be the Christian Life, to keep the holy Days, to pray, to clothe themselves as they had invented.

Therefore, they accounted other necessary good Works, for worldly, ungodly, or unnecessary Business; as, what every Body, according to his Calling, was obliged to do; *i. e.* that a Man should be obliged to work for the Maintenance of his Family, and to bring them up in the Fear of God,

God ; the Procreation and Education of Children ; the Government of Kings or Magistrates, &c. Such Commandments of the Lord, they called a worldly and imperfect Work ; but their Traditions and Institutions, were boasted and called by this fine Name, that such only were holy and perfect Works ; and therefore, there is no End or Measure of new Institutions.

Thirdly, Such Institutions occasioned great burthening in the Conscience ; for, it was impossible to keep these Institutions, since the People were kept in that Opinion, that these Institutions were accounted needful to worship God. *Gerson* writes, that many are fallen in Desperation, and have killed themselves, since they were not instructed in the Grace through Christ. For, we see by the Sommits and Divines, how they brought the Conscience in Confusion, who had undertaken to throw their Institutions together, in one Uniform, to help Consciences, did find so much Work therewith, that thereby all the needful and wholesome Christian Doctrine of more Weight ; as of Faith, of Comfort in Temptations, and such like, were quite forgot and neglected. Wherefore many true Christians, in former Times, complained, that their Institutions made great Contentions in the Church, and that the pious People, were thereby hindered of coming to the true Knowledge of Christ. *Gerson*, and others, have greatly complained of it. *Augustin* disliked, that the Consciences were so tortured by their Institutions ; and gives these Instructions, Not to keep them as needful to Salvation. Therefore, our Divines have been obliged, not out of Insolence, or to despise the spiritual Power ; but have been in Conscience, bound to take no Notice of the above-mentioned Errors, which are derived from their Institutions, to teach against their Traditions : For the Gospel requires, that we should preach the Faith in Christ, in the Church, which can have no Effect, if we are instructed to receive Grace by our own invented Institutions, or good Works ; therefore do we teach, that we do not receive Grace by our own invented Institutions, or good Works, to reconcile the Lord, or satisfy for our Transgressions and Sins ; wherefore these good Works shall not be look'd on, as if we serve God with them. This we prove by the Scripture, *Mat. xv.* Christ defends his Disciples, when they had transgressed against their Instructions : *But in vain they do worship me, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.* Since our Saviour calls this a vain Worship, then it is not needful, but needless. And directly after this he saith, *Not that which goeth into the Mouth defileth a Man, but that which cometh out of the Mouth, this defileth a Man.* Likewise, saith *St. Paul, Rom. xiv.* For, *the Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink :* And in *Col. ii.* *Let no Man therefore judge you in Meat or in Drink, or in Respect of holy Days, &c.* And in the *Acts*, says *St. Peter*, *Chap. xv.* Now, therefore, *why tempt ye God, to put a Yoke upon the Neck of the Disciples, which neither our Fathers, nor we were able to bear,*
but

but we believe, through the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved. Here prohibits the Apostle *Peter*, that we should not lay any Yoke upon the Consciences with outward Ceremonies, be it of *Moses*, or any others. And, 1 *Tim.* Chap. iv. Such Institutions are called a Doctrine from the Devil, to forbid to marry, and commanding to abstain from Meat : For this is against the Gospel or Doctrine of Christ, to make such Institutions, or to oblige People to them ; as if they could receive Remission of Sins through them, and as if no body could be a Christian without keeping them. But they reflect upon us, as if we prohibited the Correction and Discipline, as *Jovinianus* did ;— but they will find the contrary in our Writing ; for they always thought of the Crosses which Christians are obliged to bear ; and this is the only Chastisement which Christians are bound to bear, and not self-invented Chastisements. Therefore, we teach likewise, that every one is obliged to crucify his Body, with fasting, and other bodily Exercises, that he gives no Offence, or Occasion to sin ; not that we, through such Works, merit Mercy. This bodily Exercise should not only be practised upon certain Days, but constantly ; as Christ speaks, to take heed, lest our Hearts be overcharged with Wantonness and Drunkenness ; and that the Devil is not to be cast out, but by Fasting and Prayers ; and St. *Paul* says, *He chastised his Body to bring it to Obedience* : Whereby he directs, that he chastised his Body, not to receive Grace thereby, but to keep the Body in Order, that he may be able to do what he is obliged to do, in his Business or Calling, therefore fasting is not prohibited ; but not to make certain Days of Fasting from Meats, thereby to receive Mercy by it, for a Yoke of the Conscience. Likewise do we keep many Ceremonies and Institutions ; as Prayers, Songs, and Feasts, &c. which serve to keep Orders in the Church : But our People are taught and instructed, that such outward Service deserves not any Grace before God, and that they without charging the Conscience ; so that if any one neglects them without Offence, he don't thereby sin against his Conscience. This Liberty in outward Ceremonies, have the Forefathers likewise kept : For, in the Eastern Countries, they had not kept the Passover at the same Day or Time when they kept it at *Rome* ; and when some People would take this, as if it was a Dissension or Schism in the Church ; they are admonished by others, that it was not needful in such Customs to keep them. And *Irenaeus* says, that such Inequality, in Ceremonies or Fasting, don't break the Inequality in Faith : Likewise, *Distinct* 12, of such Inequalities in human Institutions, is wrote, that it is not against the Unity in christendom. And *Tripartita* Hist. Lib. 9, draws together several unequal Church Constitutions and Customs, making a needful Christianlike Observation on it. The Apostle's Meaning has not been, to make Fast-Days, or other Institutions, but to preach Faith and Love.

ARTICLE XXVII.

Of the Cloyster Vows.

To speak of the Cloyster Vows, it will be necessary, *First*, how they have been manag'd this Time; what Sort of Oeconomy was kept in the Cloysters; and that therein daily, much Sins have been committed; not only against the Word of God, but likewise against the papistical Laws. For, in St. *Augustin's* Time, the Stations in the Cloyster were free; but after that, the true Modesty and Doctrine decayed. They have invented Cloyster Vows, and therewith, as with a well-contriv'd Prison, to erect the decaying Modesty. Moreover, they have made daily, by the Cloyster Vows, more Institutions: And with such Yokes and Bondage, a great many were bound and charged, before they arriv'd to the Years of Discretion. There are likewise many Persons, out of Ignorance, gone into the Cloyster; for, altho' they were not too young, yet still, they were not able to search into their own Abilities and Strength. All these bound and brought under Yoke, were obliged to remain under this Yoke; tho' the Pope's Laws has set many of them free: And it is more insisted upon in the Women's Cloyster than in Men's, where it ought to have been more indulgent in the Women's than in the Men's Cloyster; for the Women are called the weaker Vessel. These Hardships a great many pious People have dislik'd; for they found, that the Boys and Girls, for their Maintenance, were only brought into the Cloyster: They likewise saw, what bad Ends, what Offence and Scandal, and what Heaviness in the Conscience it occasioned. And a great many People have complain'd, that they, in this hard Case, did not follow the Canons of the Church. They likewise have had such Opinion of the Cloyster Vows, which as it is well known, many Monks have dislik'd, who had a little Insight and Wit. For, they did teach, that the Cloyster Vows was like the Baptism; And that, by living in the Cloyster, a Body might receive Forgiveness of Sins, and be justified thereby before the Lord. Yea, they added that, by living in a Cloyster, they did deserve and obtain not only the Justification and Piety, but likewise kept, and fulfilled the Commandments and Ordinations, which are contained in the Gospel, and preferred the Cloyster Vows unto the Baptism. Likewise, that we deserved more by living within a Cloyster, than with all other Institutions which are ordained by the Lord; as, by being a Minister and Teacher, a Magistrate, or a Duke and Lord; all such, ordained in the Gospel, by the Lord in their Call, are done without self-witted spiritual Service. All which cannot be denied, for we find the same in their Books; and above all, whosoever is confined in the Cloysters, learns but very little of Christ.

In former Times, there were erected Schools, wherein the Scripture and other Arts have been taught, which were serviceable to the Christian Church, in the Cloysters; so that they took Teachers and Bishops out

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of them. But at present, it is quite otherways; for, in former Times, they did meet in the Cloisters, for this Reason, that they were instructed in the Scriptures. At present, they say and teach, that, by living in a Cloister, they may merit the Grace of God, and live upright therein before God: Yea, it is a State of Perfection, and prefer it above all the Commands made by God. This is therefore mentioned, (without the least Disrespect) that every one may see and understand what, and how our Ministers teach. *First*, They teach by us, of them which are going to be married; so that all which are not able or inclined to live single, have Power and Right to be lawfully married: For the Vows are not able to break the Institutions of God. Now are the Commandments of God; *1 Cor. vii. To avoid Fornication, let every Man have his own Wife, and let every Woman have her own Husband.* Thereunto obliges and forces, not only the Lord's Commands, but likewise God's Creatures and Institution, all them, who, without special Grace, with the Gift of Chastity, are indowed: As the Lord himself says, *Gen. ii. 18. It is not good that the Man should be alone, I will make him an Help-meet for him.* Wherewith can they contradict this? They may praise their Cloister Vows as high as they please, and hold them as great as they will, so they cannot force thereout, that the Lord's Commandments are thereby broke. The learned Doctors say, that the Vows against the Pope's Laws, stand in no Force; much less should this stand in Force against the Laws of God. The Dispensations of the Pope shews, and must shew, that the Obligations to the Cloister can be disannulled; but not the Duties derived from the Word of God. For this Reason, the Popes have well considered, that in this Duty, an Equality ought to be used, and have often given their Dispensations; as to the King of *Arragon*, and several others.

Now if they could dispense in Cases belonging to the Conservation of temporal Things, how much more should they dispense in the Soul's Concern. Further, why do our Antagonists stand so hard upon the Performancé of Vows, and do not consider first, whether they are lawfully done? For a Vow must be in a free Case willingly and not forced. But whether an everlasting Continence or Chastity lays in the Power of Men, is known very well: And there are but few of both Sexs, that have vowed a Cloister Vow willingly, and with a due Consideration. Before ever they come to their Years of Discretion, they are persuaded to Cloister Vows, and often are they forced to it. Therefore it is not lawful to dispute and argue in such a rigorous Manner, of the Duty of a Vow, since every one must own, that it is against the very Nature of the Vows to vow some Things unwillingly, without good Advice and Prudence.

Some Canons and Papistical Laws disannul all Vows done or made before the Fifteenth Year of Age. For they suppose, that before such Age, a Man or Woman incapable to resolve how to transact all his Life-time.

Another

Another Canon indulges human Frailty, forbidding a Cloister Vow before the Eighteenth Year.

By these the greatest Part can take an Excuse to quit the Cloister, for they came to it, for the greatest Part in their Childhood, &c. And, finally, if the breaking of the Cloister's Vow should reprove, it doth not follow that their Matrimony can be divorced; For St. *Augustin* says, 27. 9. cap. 1. *Nuptiarum*, that such a Marriage must not be dissolved. Now the Authority in the Christian Church is great, though some afterwards did hold to the contrary. Howbeit, now the Word of God about Matrimony hath dispensed and cleared free from the Cloister's Vows: We can still alledge more Arguments, why such Vows are unlawful and irrational. For all Worship found out by Men, without the Command of God, is against God and his Commands, as Christ says, *Mat. xv. In vain do they worship me, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*. Thus *Paul* teaches every where, that we must not seek Righteousness by our Works, and worship Inventions of Men; but that the Righteousness and Holiness before God, cometh forth by true Faith in Confidence in God; believing that God, will accept and receive us by his Grace in Christ Jesus his only Son.

It is clear and evident, that the Monks have taught and preached, that the fictitious Spirituality imagined, did atone before God, merit Grace, and Righteousness: This is nothing else than to diminish the Price and Honour of Christ's Merits, and to deny the Righteousness of Faith. Hence it follows, that such usual Vows and Worship have been unlawful, and a false Worship, and are also irrational. For the Vow of a wicked Person, and done without a Command of God, is void, and irrational, according to the Canons, setting forth, that the Oath, shall not be a Bondage to Sin. *Paul* says to the *Galatians* v. *Christ is become of no effect unto you: Whosoever of you are justified by the Law, ye are fallen from Grace*.

Therefore also them, desiring to be justified by their Vows, fall from Christ, and the Grace of God: For they bereave Christ of his Honour, justifying alone, and give such Honour to their Cloisters Vows.

It can also not be denied, that the Monks have taught and preached, that they are justified by their Vows, and their living in the Cloister, and that they merit the Forgiveness of Sins; yea, they pretend still Things of a greater Impudence, saying, that they could communicate their good Works unto others. If now a Body would undertake to make use of such Things, and publish them to the World, what commical Doctrines would appear, whereof now, even the Monks themselves are ashamed, and will not be guilty thereof. By all this they would persuade the World, that a fictitious Spirituality was a spiritual Estate, and the Estate of Christian Perfection. Is this not to boast of Works in Order to be justified by them? It is not a small Scandal in the Christian Church to impose upon the People with such a Worship; teaching, that
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by a Worship, invented by Men, without the Command of God, Men should be rendered innocent and righteous before God. For the Righteousness of Faith, which ought to be most chiefly worked upon in the Churches, is darkned by it, if People is deluded and blinded in their Eyes with such a strange angelical Spirituality of Poverty, Humility, and Chastness; yea the Commands of God, and the true Worship of God is corrupted, if common People hears, that only the Monks should live in an Estate of Perfection: For the true Christian Perfection is, that we fear God heartily and seriously, and in the mean Time have this Confidence and Reliance by Faith, that we enjoy a merciful and gracious God for Christ's Sake, having the Liberty to pray and to ask of God, what we want, looking for Assistance in our Distresses, in every Station and Calling: And that we forget not to do outwardly good Works, following our Calling faithfully: This is true Perfection, but not a gray or black Cap, &c.

But common People conceives many false Opinions by the false Glory of the Life in the Cloisters. For if they hear Virginity praised beyond Measure, it follows, that they enter into the matrimonial Estate, with a troubled Conscience: For if common People hear, that the beggar Monks shall be alone perfect, they don't know whether they may possess their Goods lawfully. If they hear that it is only an Advice, not to seek Revenge, they will presume, they can exercise Revenge without to be in Commission. Some imagine, that neither Revenge or Magistrates is consistig with the Christendom.

We have many Instances also, that some Women and Children have left their Station, and went into the Cloisters: And this should be, as they say, to flee from the World, and to seek a Way of Life more pleasing to God, than the Life of others (living in their Calling.)

ARTICLE XXVIII.

Of the Power of Bishops.

There hath been much Writings in old Times of the Power of the Bishops in many Respects: Some have irrationally confounded, (or mixed,) the Episcopal Power and the Wordly Sword, and by these unhappy Confusions, many great Wars and Rebellions did arise, (spring up.) Whence the Bishops, under the Pretext of the Power given them by Christ, have not only erected a new Sort of Worship, and with Reservation of some Cases, they have violently overcharged the Consciences; Yea, they have also undertaken to introduce Kings, Princes and Emperors, and to discharge them again: Which impudent Undertaking, hath been long ago, reproved by many learned and Christian People.

Therefore, our Party hath been forced to the Comfort of the Conscience, to shew the Distinction between the spiritual and temporal Power, between Sword and Authority: And taught, that these two Ordinances
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and Governments, for the Sake of God's Commands, are to be honoured and reverenced with all due Respect, as two of the greatest Gifts of the Lord.

Now our People teaches thus, that the Power of the Kees, or the Bishops (according to the Gospel) is the Power and Command of God, to preach the Gospel, to pardon or retain the Sins, and to administer the Sacraments. For Christ did send his Apostles with this Commission; *As my Father hath sent me, so have I sent you. Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever Sins ye retain, they are retained.* The same Power of the Bishops, is only exercised and practised by the preaching the Word of God, and the Administration of the Sacrament, as also by laying up the Hands: For by such Means are not given bodily, but eternal Things and Gifts; namely, eternal Righteousness, the Holy Ghost, and eternal Life. These Goods can't be received but by the preaching the Word of God, and the Administration of the Sacraments. For Paul says, *The Gospel is the Power of God unto Salvation, to every one that believeth.* Since now the Power of the Church, or the Bishops, gives eternal Goods (Benefits) and this by the Office of Preaching the Word of God, it hinders or incroaches not the political or worldly Government. For the political Government hath entirely other Objects, as the Gospel, whose Power doth not defend or protect the Soul, but the Body and Goods against outward Violence, by the Sword, or bodily Punishment.

Therefore, the two Governments, the Temporal and Spiritual, are not to be mixed into one another: For the Spiritual hath its Commands to preach the Gospel, and to administer the Sacraments; and hath no Power to incroach on a strange Office, nor to establish Kings, nor to discharge them: Nor hath the spiritual Government, Power to resist temporal Laws of the Magistrates, or to abrogate or break them, nor to make Laws unto the temporal Power, as Christ himself hath said, *My Kingdom is not of this World.* Item, *Who has ordained me a Judge between you.* And, *Eph. iii. Our Conversation is in Heaven.* 2 Cor. x. *For the Weapons of our Warfare are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong Holds, casting down Imaginations, and every high Thing that exalts itself against the Knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every Thought, to the Obedience of Christ.*

And this is the Way our Party (or People) distinguishes the two Estates; and that they must be both honoured as the greatest Gifts of God upon Earth. And if there are some Bishops, having the temporal Government and the Sword, they have it not as Bishops, but by human imperial Laws, as Gifts of Emperors and Kings, to the ruling their worldly Estates, and it doth not belong to the Office of the Gospel: Therefore, is the Episcopal Office by the divine Laws, constituted, to preach the Gospel, to pardon (or declare) the Forgiveness of Sins, to decide Doc-

trines, to reject and condemn the Doctrines contrary to the Gospel, to exclude the wicked Ones, whose Wickedness is publicly manifest, from the Christian Congregation, without any human Power, but only by the Word of God. And in such Cases are the Hearers and Churches obliged to submit, as Christ says, *Luke x. He that heareth you heareth me.* But if they should ordain or establish any Thing contrary to the Gospel, we have the Command of God, not to submit or obey, *Mat. vii. Beware of false Prophets. Gal. i. But though we, or any Angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you, let him be accursed.* 2 Cor. *ibid. For we can do nothing against the Truth, but for the Truth.* Item, *Christ hath given me Power to mend but not to destroy.* In the same Manner teaches the Law of Canonites, 2, 9, 7. C. *Sacerdotes.* And Chap. *Oves.* *Augustin* in his Epistle against Petiliancy, writes, *We shall not obey the Bishops, tho' they are lawfully chosen, if they err; or if they teach and ordain any Thing against the Scriptures.*

That now at present the Bishops have Right and Power to act in some Cases by the Force of the Law, namely, about Marriage or Tithe, is only by human Laws: But if they should act in such Cases unlawful, it is the Duty of the Princes, (they may do it willingly or unwillingly) to procure or to do Justice to their Subjects, in Order to prevent Discontent and Rebellion. 'Tis also disputed and questioned, whether the Bishops have a Right to erect Ceremonies in the Church, about the Difference of Meat, about Feast Days, about the Distinction in the Orders of the Clergy: They that ascribe to the Bishops these Powers, allege for their Proofs the Words of Christ, *John xvi. 12. I have yet many Things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now: Howbeit, when the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you unto all Truth.* They allege also the Words, *Acts*, where they have forbidden the Blood, and to abstain from the strangled Things. They use likewise for their Proof, the Alteration of the Sabbath Day, which is done (as they imagine) against the Ten Commands, and no Instance is more used to prove their Opinion than these, desiring to demonstrate thereby, that the Power of the Church is great, since she dispensed about the Ten Commands, and made an Alteration therein.

But our Party (People) teaches in this Question thus, that the Bishops have no right to establish any Thing against the Gospel, as it is mentioned in the foregoing, and as the canonical Laws shews in the whole ninth Distinction. Now this is openly against the Word and Command of God, to make Ordinances in View to satisfy by them for our Sins, and to merit Grace. For the Glory of Christ's Merits is thereby offended, or blasphemed, if we by such Ordinances undertake to merit Grace: It is also manifest, that in these Respects unspeakable Ordinances are intruded, and in the mean Time the Doctrine of Faith, and the Righteousness by Faith, hath been suppressed, and kept under. It is known, that most
every

every Day, new Feast Days, new Feast Commands, new Ceremonies, new Adorations of the Saints have been instituted, in order to merit by such works Grace, and all good Things from God. *Item*, Them that establish human Ordinances, act by it against the Command of God, making more Sins in the Commands about Meat Days and such like, &c. burthening Christendom with the Bondage of the Laws, even as if there was or should be amongst the Christians such a Worship, like the Levitical Economy, which God should have commanded unto the Apostles and the Prophets, to establish such Things, as some write thereof. We have good Reason to believe, that some Bishops have been seduced by the Law of *Moses*, which was the Offspring of so many unspeakable Ordinances, that it was a mortal Sin, if a Body was a Working with his Hands upon a Feast Day, (especially when it was done without Design to give a Scandal to others.) A mortal Sin it was, if a Body neglect the seven Times, (of reading and praying) that some Meat should spoil the Conscience; that feasting should be a Work of meriting Grace, or reconcile God; that the Sin in a reserved Case was not forgiven, except the Reserver of the Thing is spoken first, tho' the canonical Laws don't speak of the Reservation of the Guilt, but of the Church Discipline, (or Punishment.) And from whence have the Bishops Power and Right to intrude such Ordinances unto Christendom, or to intangle the Consciences; for *Peter* in the *Acts*, forbids, to put a Yoke upon the Neck of the Disciples. And *Paul* says to the *Corinthians*, that unto him was given the Power to mend, but not to destroy: Why do they then multiply Sins by such Institutions; for we have plain Scripture Proofs, wherein it is forbidden to erect such Ordinances in View to merit Grace, or as if they were needful to Salvation. *Col. ii.* Let no Man therefore judge you in Meat or in respect of an Holy Day, or of the new Moon, or the Sabbath Days: Which are a Shadow of Things to come, but the Body is of Christ. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the Rudiments of the World; are ye yet subject to the Ordinances? Touch not, taste not; which all are to perish with the Using, after the Commandments and Doctrines of Men: Which Things have indeed a shew of Wisdom. *Item*, *Paul* forbids plainly, *1 Tim. ii.* Not to give Heed to Fables and Doctrines of Men, which seduce from the Truth. And thus Christ himself speaks against them that drive Men to human Doctrines, Let them alone, they are blind, and blind Teachers; and respecting their Worship, saying, Every Plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. If now the Bishops have Power to burthen the Church with unspeakable Ordinances, and to intangle the Consciences: Why is it then so often forbidden in the holy Records for Men to make Institutions, and to hear them? Why is it called a Doctrine of the Devils? Hath then the Holy Ghost admonished it in vain?

Therefore,

Therefore, since such Ordinances are erected as if they were needful to reconcile God therewith, and to merit Grace, and are contrary to the Gospel; it doth not become the Bishops by no Means to intrude such Things by Force and Power: For the Doctrine of the Christian Liberty must be preserved in the Christianity, namely, that the Servantship (or Servitude) of the Law, is not necessary to the Justification, whereof *Paul* speaks *Gal. v. Stand fast therefore in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not intangled again with the Yoke of Bondage.* For the most chief Article of the Gospel must be preferred before any, *vid.* that we receive Grace by Faith in Christ Jesus without our Merits, and not to merit it by a Worship instituted by Men.

What shall we think or say then of the Sunday, or such like Church Ordinances? As for this, our Party (or People) answer thus, That the Bishop or Pastors may appoint Ordinances to hinder all Disorders, but not in View to receive the Grace of God thereby, or to satisfy for our Sins therewith, nor to bind the Consciences, or to hold all such Things for a needful Worship of God, even as if they, who break them without a Scandal, should commit Sins. Thus ordained *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, That the Women in the Church should cover their Heads: Also, that the Ministers should not speak all at once in the Church, but orderly, one after the other.

Such Ordinances ought a Christian Church to preserve to promote Peace and Unity, and to obey the Bishops and Pastors in this Respect, that one doth not offend the other, least in the Churches some Disorder, or Confusion might arise: But so, that the Consciences don't get burthened. As if such Things were needful to Salvation, or as if they, that break them Ordinances, without to offend any Body, did a Sin; since no Body says, that a Woman, going to the Church with an uncovered Head, and offends no Body by it, commits a Sin.

Thus likewise is the Ordinance of the Lord's Day, of the Easter Feasts Days, of the Pinxter Feasts, and such like Feast Days, and Customs. But those who think that the Ordinance of the Lord's is needfully appointed for the Sabbath Day, they err greatly: For the holy Scripture has abrogated the Sabbath, and learns, that all the Ceremonies of the old Law, according to the Revelation of the Gospel, must be let alone; and yet while it has been needful to appoint a certain Day, that the People might know when they must meet together, thus the Catholick Church has appointed for it the Lord's Day. And to this Alteration they have been so much the more inclin'd, to give a Patron of the Christian Liberty, to let us know, that neither the keeping of the Sabbath Day, or of any other Day is needful.

There are many useles Disputes concerning the Alteration of the Law, concerning the Ceremonies of the New Testament, and concerning the Alteration of the Sabbath; all which have proceeded out of a false and

erroneous

erroneous Meaning, as if we must have such a Religion in the Christendom, which was like unto the *Levitical* or *Jewish* Religion, and as if Jesus should have commanded the Apostles and Bishops to invent new Ceremonies, which were necessary to Salvation. The same Errors have crept in the Christendom, since we have not learnt and preach'd the Righteousness of the Faith pure and sound. Some dispute likewise concerning the Lord's Day, that we must keep it, although not out of a divine Right, and put Restrictions how far we may labour upon solemn Feast Days. But what are such Disputes otherwise, than Snares of the Consciences? For although they themselves undertake to indulge human Institutions, yet we can't get no Mitigation or Dispensation, as long as that meaning stays and remains, that they should be necessary. Now the same Meaning must remain, if we have no Knowledge of the Righteousness of the Faith, and of the Christian Liberty. The Apostles have commanded that we must keep ourselves from Things strangled, and from Blood: But who keeps that now? And yet they do no Sin, who don't keep it; for likewise the Apostles themselves would not burthen their Consciences with such a Servitude, but have upon the Account of giving Offence, forbid it for a long Time: For we must have regard always in this Institution, to the chief Christian Doctrine, that the same may not be overthrown by such Institutions.

We keep almost no old Canons, accordingly to their Contents, and they daily fall away greatly in their Institution, even by those, who keep such Institutions most diligently. There we cannot advise nor help the Consciences, if this Mitigation is not kept, that we may know that such Institutions are likewise to be kept, not that keep it for that, that they are necessary, that it may likewise not be burthenfome to the Consciences, if so be such Institutions may happen to fall. But it would be easily to bear Obedience to the Bishops, if they did not force (insist) upon it, to keep such Institutions which may not be kept without Sin. But now they do one Thing, and forbid the double Form of the holy Sacraments. *Item.* They forbid Marriage to the Priest, and accept no Body before that he first has taken an Oath, that he will not preach this Doctrine, which without Doubt is conformable unto the holy Gospel.

The Members of our Church, do not pretend, that the Bishops should make Peace and Unity against their Honour and Dignity, (or to hurt their Honour and Dignity) although it was becoming in a Case of Necessity to do such Things; but their only Desire is, to quit some irrationable Burthens, which in former Times never have been received in the Church, against the Custom of the Catholick Church, which perhaps in the Beginning hath had some Reasons for it, but they won't suit our Times, as being not consistent with it.

And it cannot be denied by no Means, that some Ceremonies have been introduced without Reason; therefore the Bishops ought to be so kind,

kind, to dispense, or mitigate such Ceremonies, since such an Alteration would not be an Impediment to entertain Peace and Unity in the Christian Church; for many Institutions ordained by Men, fell by the Progress of Time by themselves, and are not necessary, as the Papistical Canons witness themselves. But if it is impossible to prevail upon them to quit or mitigate some Ordinance, which without Sin cannot be kept, we are obliged to follow the Rule of the Apostles, *We ought to obey God rather than Men.*

The Apostles forbids the Bishops to use Force or Dominion, which proves plainly, that they have no Power to necessitate Churches to what they please. But now our Intention is not to diminish or to take away the Power from the Bishops, but our Meaning and Desire is not to force Consciences to sin: But if they will not consent to that, and contemn this our Petition, they may see how they will answer God for it, since by rigorous Proceedings they will give an Occasion to Dissensions and Schism, which they ought to prevent by all Means.

Conclusion of these ARTICLES.

These are the chief Articles, whereof we thought, that there was some Dispute about it. For, though we might here alledge many Abuses and Disorders, we have given only an Account of the most notorious to escape Prolixity; and of them we left out, maybe given the same Judgment: For in former Times, there hath been a great Complaint about or against the Banishment.

Also the Priests have had an endless Quarrel with the Monks about the Confession and Absolution, Burial, funeral Sermons, and unspeakably more: And such we pass with a good View to preserve their Honour, &c. in Order to set the chief Articles into a clearer Light, that any one may Judge thereof the better. No Body must think, that any Thing is alledged by hatred or in View to dishonour any Body; but the needful Points have been only alledged to shew the clearer, that by us is nothing received in Doctrine or Ceremonies contrary to the Holy Scripture, or Catholick Church. For it is clear and evident, that we by the Grace of God, have done our utmost Endeavour, that no new or erroneous Doctrine might creep in or prevail. These abovementioned Articles are delivered according to the Proclamation, to shew our Confession and Articles of Faith: And if there might be some wanting the Knowledge thereof, we offer our Service to give a larger Instruction, according to the holy Word of God.

ANNO 1643

N. B. It was subscribed by the Electors and Princes, &c. mentioned in the Beginning.

P. I. N. T. S.

Kind Reader,

BEHOLD the long Pen, whereof Dr. MARTIN LUTHER dreamed once, that he had a Pen reaching to Rome, to the Pope's Miter, wherewith he throwed of his Miter; I mean the Confession delivered by the Lutheran Princes at Ausbourg to the Emperor CHARLES V. Every Reader being acquainted with the History before the Reformation, and the blessed Consequences following thereupon, must acknowledge, that the tyrannical Slavery of Popery hath been a falling till now. Kind Reader, I have nothing to add here, but to beseech you to correct the few Faults committed in translating and printing, which escaped my Sight, according to Love and Truth. Readers that will find Fault, will even find Fault in the holy Word of God, and for such, I have no Advice. The private Opinions of the Author of the Sermons, no candid Reader will ascribe to the holy Evangelical Church, as their Articles of Faith.

I remain,

Kind Reader,

Your willing Servant,

NEW-YORK, the

11th, Nov. 1755.

In the Lord,

JOHN ALBERT WEYGAND,

Minister of the Gospel in the old Lutheran
Church in New-York, and Hackensack.

ERRATA.

Page 17, Line 12, Instead of pass, read, can shew his Presence. Page 18, Line 37, for seeking, read, seeing his Face. Page 26, Line 27, to cleanse the Good, may be counted to the private Opinions of the Author. Page 26, Line 31, for *Michael*, read, *Micha*. Page 29, Line 24, for to lent, read, to have lent in Time. Page 30, Line 12, by the Words, in its Essence, add, tho' not separated from the Essence of the Son and the holy Ghost. Page 30, Line 39, by the Words, but alone in Regard, leave *alone* out. Page 37, Line 22, by the Word ten Thousand, leave out *ten*. Page 53, Line 26, for the God, read, to God. Page 53, Line 32, by the Word unalterable, add, Good. Page 57, Line 42, for pardon the Holy, read, regard the Holy. Page 59, Line 43, by the Word *all*, add, by Nature. Page 116, Line 17, by the Word against, leave out *it*. Page 119, Line 6, for mocoplated, read, completed. Page 120, Line 9, for teaching, read, deceiving. Page 134, Line 32, for faithfulness, read, Fullness. Page 145, Line 23, for external, read, eternal. Page 147, Line 17, for Good, read, God. Page 147, Line 42, for Ejection, read, Reprobation. Page 156, Line 42, by the Word Nothing, add, should be done. Page 161, Line 38, by the Words the three Persons, add, which became one, but are one from Eternity. Page 161, Line 41, for live, read, Life. Page 168, Line 39, by the Word Three, add, of the three Offices. Page 180, Line 17, for circumcised, read, crucified. Page 134, Line 25, by the Word *out*, add, in this World, in the Articles of Justification.

Note, That the Pages are wrong folio'd from Page 210.

Errata in the AUSBOURGH CONFESSION.

Page 3, Line 13, read *Manichai*. Page 3, Line 30, for another Sect, read, and other Sects. Page 5, Line 9, read after the Word *God* (:) instead of (.) Page 7, Line 2, for strengthening, read, strengthening. Page 8, Line 31, for implaned, read, implanted. Page 9, Line 28, for hath, read, have. Page 12, in undermost Line, by the Word Cardinal, add, Cusanus, and being abrogated, leave out. Page 17, Line 4, for Paroche, read, Parochie.

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